

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

April 3, 2009

The Honorable David R. Obey
Chairman
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
House Appropriations Committee
2358-B Rayburn House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Todd Tiahrt
Ranking Member
Subcommittee on Labor-HHS-Education
House Appropriations Committee
1016 Longworth House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

SUBJECT: FY 2010 Domestic HIV Prevention Programs

Dear Chairman Obey and Ranking Member Tiahrt:

We are writing to express our strong support for increased funding for domestic HIV/AIDS prevention programs in Fiscal Year 2010, as well as funding for a new program that is vital to HIV prevention. We appreciate the Committee's attention to these essential programs in the past and strongly encourage you to increase your commitment this year. In addition, we ask that you address two other matters that have been included in the annual Labor, HHS Appropriations bills that impede evidence-based HIV prevention.

HIV/AIDS continues to be a serious health issue in the United States. Last year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced that there were 56,300 new HIV infections in the U.S. in 2006, or 40 percent more than previous estimates. The CDC reports that there are an estimated 1.1 million people living with HIV in the U.S. HIV can be prevented, and with proper investment, we can reduce the number of new infections and reduce future healthcare costs. The CDC estimates that it would cost \$9.5 billion to treat the 56,300 new infections each year in the U.S. Preventing disease, such as HIV, can save billions of tax payers' dollars. We ask that as you consider appropriations requests for FY 2010, please consider the following critical requests for domestic HIV/AIDS prevention programs:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

The number of people infected with HIV continues to rise at an alarming rate, particularly among African Americans and men who have sex with men. Unfortunately, HIV prevention funding has not seen any increases. In FY 2008, CDC HIV Prevention

funding was cut by \$3.5 million and for FY 2009 it is flat funded. Adjusted for inflation, CDC's HIV prevention budget has *decreased* by 19.3% since FY 2002.

State and local health departments and community based organizations are in desperate need of increased resources in order to strengthen and expand outreach, education, HIV testing, and prevention programs targeting high-risk populations. After significant analysis and planning for HIV epidemic in this nation, the CDC has testified that they will need an additional \$877 million over each of the next five years . **Therefore, we are requesting an increase of \$877 million for a total of \$1.57 billion for CDC HIV prevention activities in FY 2010.**

Comprehensive Sex Education

This past World AIDS Day, President Obama affirmed that, "My administration will ...work with Congress to enact an extensive program of prevention, including access to comprehensive age-appropriate sex education for all school age children." The federal government currently provides no federal funding solely dedicated to comprehensive sex education. This strategy is clearly not working. The CDC recently reported that the number of teenagers having babies rose for the second straight year in 2007, and the number of unmarried women having babies also rose, accounting for almost 40 percent of all births in 2007. We need to invest in programs that provide all of our young people with complete, accurate, and age-appropriate sex education that helps them reduce their risk of HIV/AIDS, other STDs, and unintended pregnancy. Programs that include information about both abstinence and contraception help keep young people safe ! by delaying sexual activity and increasing contraception use when they do become sexually active. **We request that at least \$50 million be allocated to promote comprehensive sex education in our schools and communities nationwide.**

Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE)


In the United States, HIV is transmitted primarily through sex. In order to combat the rising rates of transmission, we must ensure that sexuality education programs are medically sound and effective in fostering healthful behavior over the long-term.. Abstinence is an important component of comprehensive sexuality education and HIV prevention programs; however, when it is advocated as the only option for young people, research has shown that that it is ineffective, unrealistic, and potentially harmful. We believe the federal government should only support those sexuality education and HIV-prevention programs that are evidence-based. For that reason **we support the elimination of all funding for the Community-Based Abstinence Education (CBAE) programs. All such funds should be re-directed to evidence-based prevention and educational programs.**

Syringe Exchange Programs


At least one quarter of all reported AIDS cases in our country are attributed to injection drug use through the sharing of needles and syringes. Federal scientific studies have repeatedly demonstrated that syringe exchange programs reduce the transmission of HIV and other infectious diseases without increasing or encouraging the use of illicit drugs, and may even help reduce drug use by creating a point of entry for addiction treatment. Today, there are nearly 200 syringe exchange programs operating in 38 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico. These programs also provide referrals to addiction counseling and other supportive service. Despite the proven effectiveness of these programs, there is a ban on the use of federal funds for syringe exchange programs. We must provide states and localities the resources they need to continue fighting the transmission of HIV/AIDS in ways that are proven to work. **We urge you to lift the federal funding ban on syringe exchange programs in the FY 2010 Labor, HHS Appropriations bill.**


Thank you for considering these requests. We commend the Subcommittee's support for domestic HIV/AIDS prevention, and ask that you increase your support in FY 2010.


Sincerely,

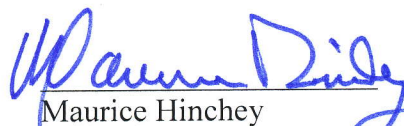

Tammy Baldwin
Member of Congress

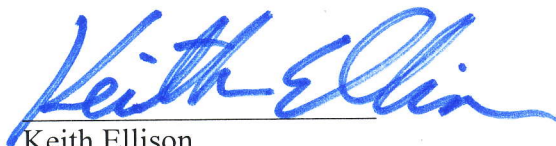

Donna Christensen
Member of Congress


Anthony Weiner
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Henry Waxman
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Pete Stark
Member of Congress

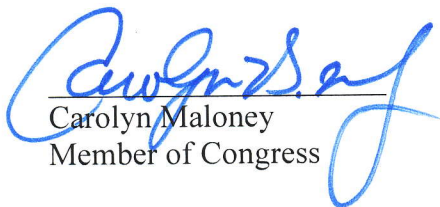

Maurice Hinchey
Member of Congress



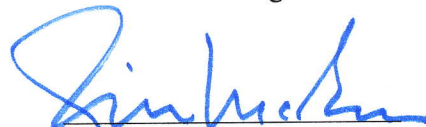
Keith Ellison
Member of Congress



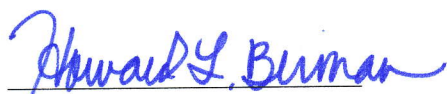
William D. Delahunt
Member of Congress



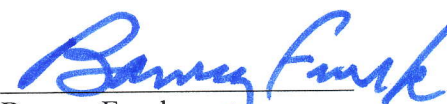
Carolyn Maloney
Member of Congress



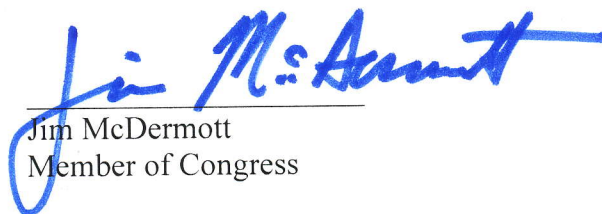
James P. McGovern
Member of Congress



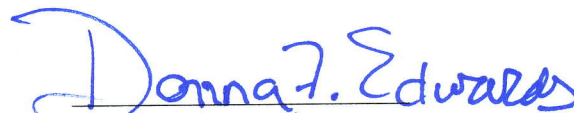
Howard L. Berman
Member of Congress



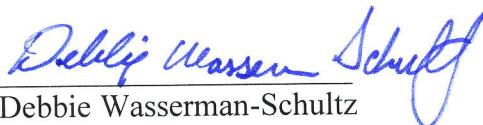
Barney Frank
Member of Congress



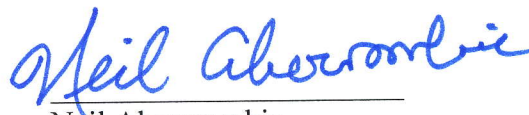
Jim McDermott
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Donna F. Edwards
Member of Congress



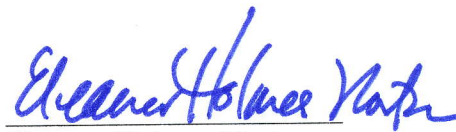
Debbie Wasserman-Schultz
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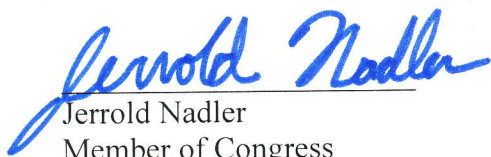
Neil Abercrombie
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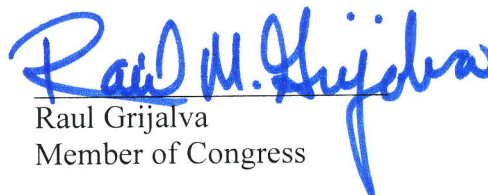
Diana DeGette
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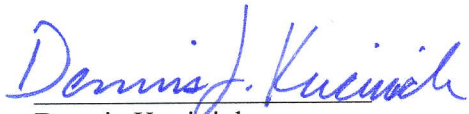
Eleanor Holmes Norton
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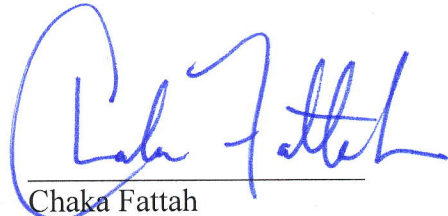
Jerrold Nadler
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Raul Grijalva
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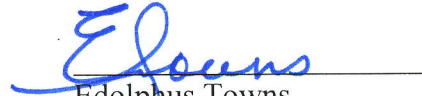
Dennis Kucinich
Member of Congress



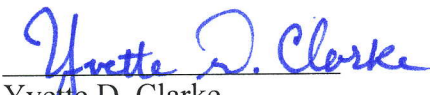
Chaka Fattah
Member of Congress



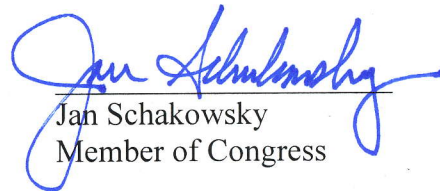
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Edolphus Towns
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Yvette D. Clarke
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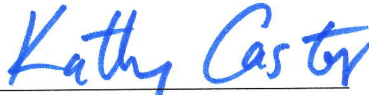
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Kathy Castor
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